

Letter from William Wade to Alexander Graham Bell, July 19, 1899

Oakmont Pa July 19 1899 Keller, Helen Dr Alexander Graham Bell Beinn Breagh Victoria
Co Nova Scotia My Dear Sir

Your's 14 th received. You make a good guess at the object of the copy of my note to The Mentor sent you. I received that paper when I arrived at home, and was at once struck with the fact that I had done you an injustice in the note I wrote for The Mentor about a year since, and I hastened to correct it, as I always feel guilty until I have corrected and apologized for any unjust charge. I have since re-written my communication, retaining the spirit of it, u but putting it in a more dignified tone. I think you will be interested in the two articles in The Mentor on Helen and the most unfortunate state of affairs; I certainly would have refrained from mixing in the matter had not most unjust charges been made in the press against Mr Gilman and had not Helen been led to believe that Mr Gilman originated the plan of separating her from Miss Sullivan, which was entirely my suggestion, and Mr Gilman had not been able to bring himself to even considering this until I urged it, saying that Miss Sullivan so constantly set herself against his influence, even openly criticizing his methods and views, at the dinner table, before other pupils and the servants, that it was no longer a question between him Helen or Miss S, but one between himself and his duty to his other pupils, as most certainly I would not permit a ward of mine (if a pupil in his school) to remain there with his influence so undermined, and by an unfortunate mistake, my letter to Mrs Keller on this point, came into Miss Sullivan's hands; I cannot imagine a course being more worthy of admiration than Mr Gilman's throughout this affair, as he has steadily adstained from any reply to the false charges made in the Boston papers, and he has not mentioned the much more serious causes of dissatisfaction Miss Sullivan produced; In fact, intimate as I have been with him in this matter, it is not to him but to Mrs Wade's cousin, a teacher in his school, to whom I owe 90 % of the information I have as

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to the more serious matters that made it impossible for Miss S to remain in the school; But lest I be misunderstood, I hasten to say that there was no moral improprieties involved. I am flattered by your wish to know me better, but really I cannot see what there is to suggest such a desire, as the extent of me is that I have known and dearly loved Helen and Linnie, and through them have become interested in the deaf-blind, and have found several of them, very interesting. I must explain that my references to Helen and the Frost Fairies, were drawn out by hearing that Anagnos has said that Helen admitted to one of his teachers, that she remembered reading Miss Canby's work while writing her own! This enraged me; Why must the Greek keep on persecuting, and lying about a girl of such innocence; 2 If a scintilla of truth had been in this statement of his, he would have given the name of his informant and a distinct narration of all about it, His own statement carries not a particle of weight; As an instance of his intense pettiness, Dr. Frank H Hall of the Ills Blind School, wrote Miss Sullivan and not knowing her address enclosed the L letter to Anagnos asking him to address and mail it and the Greek returned it saying he did not know the address! It is possible that he did not, but he knew very well that Mrs Hopkins knew it, and need only have sent Dr Hall's letter down to Oliver Cottage; The plain truth is that "The Frost Fairies" business did not stick in his craw at the time Helen gave that "tea" of her's and raised something like \$1.600 for his Kindergarten, and as long as she "drew" for The Perkins Institution, there was nothing dreadful about it, but when Miss Sullivan affronted him and Helen was drawn to the deaf and their instructors, then it was a might business.

Your's Truly